

To the Chairman and Members of the
RADSTOCK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL
in General Meeting assembled, 20th February, 1914.

ANNUAL
Report of the Medical Officer of Health
For the Year ending 31st December, 1913.

GENTLEMEN,—

I beg to submit my annual report for the year 1913, together with tables of statistics required by the Local Government Board and Secretary of State for the Home Department.

AREA OF DISTRICT.—997 acres.

GEOLOGY.—Lias formation on the new red sandstone.

PHYSICAL CONFIGURATION.—The district is intersected by two valleys, running West and East. The river Somer flows from West to East through the larger valley, and a tributary joins it from the smaller valley. The centre of the town occupies the centre of the larger valley and is thus surrounded by high ground; the whole district is hilly.

OCCUPATION.—Coal mining, wagon works, saw mills, brewing and farming.

POPULATION.—The population of the district at the last census was 3,691. The population for 1913 I have estimated to be 3,755.

BIRTHS.—The number of births registered during the year was 94, 59 males and 35 females, giving a birth rate of 25.03 per 1,000 persons living in the district. The birth rate for 1912 was 22.2.

DEATHS.—The number of deaths registered during the year was 46, 30 males and 16 females, giving a death rate of 12.22 per 1,000 persons living in the district. The death rate for 1912 was 8.5.

The following are the ages at which death occurred:—

	No. of Deaths
Under 1 year	6
1 year and under 2 years	2
2 years and under 5 years	0
5 years and under 15 years	2
15 years and under 25 years	2
25 years and under 45 years	6
45 years and under 65 years	6
65 years and upwards	22

It will be seen from the above table that about one half the deaths occurred in persons over 65 years of age. There were 6 deaths under 1 year of age, giving an infantile mortality rate of 63.8 per 1,000 children born.

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—There were 34 cases of infectious disease notified during the year, viz.:—

	Number
Tubercular affections	17
Scarlet Fever	10
Erysipelas	4
Puerperal Fever	2
Diphtheria	1

This gives 9.05 cases of notifiable disease per 1,000 population.

Tuberculosis is now a compulsory notifiable disease hence the apparent large increase in the rate.

TUBERCULOSIS.—There were 17 notifications of tubercular affections during the year. Eight males and nine females, fourteen of these were of the pulmonary variety. The rate per 1,000 of the population is 4.5. Each case has been visited and inquiries made as to family history, duration and history of the illness, occupation and workplace, wages, and health of other occupants of the house and what precautions were taken, if any. The condition of the house is inquired into and special attention is given to

overcrowding, cleanliness, ventilation and dampness and any sanitary defects are sought for. Disinfection of rooms and contents is done after a death, and the method in use is by means of an Izal spray. In dealing with tuberculosis the prevention of the disease is so closely connected with the treatment of the disease, that the two may almost be said to be identical. This work is now laid on the Sanitary authorities and it is necessary for them to be prepared to do the work as efficiently as possible.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.—This is situated at Westfield. No case has been removed to the hospital during the year. It is a most unsatisfactory place.

DISINFECTION OF HOUSES, ETC.—Formalin spraying and fumigation are used for living rooms. In cases of tuberculosis a lin. 50 Izal spray is used. Disinfectants are supplied to infected houses. There is no apparatus for disinfecting clothing and bedding. This is usually burnt where necessary.

WATER SUPPLY.—The supply is obtained from Downhead. Good in both quantity and quality. A recent analysis shows excellent results. Pease-down and Midsomer Norton are also supplied.

SEWAGE AND DRAINAGE.—Refuse is removed only on request, and then at expense of owner. The Council's Sewage works are quite satisfactory and have worked efficiently during the year.

There were at the end of December last in the district, 48 earth closets or privies, serving 331 persons, of this number 14 closets, serving 77 persons, are situate in such a position that they cannot be converted into w.c.'s. I hope that, as inspection proceed under the Housing and Town Planning Acts, the Council will, as far as they can reasonably and legitimately do so, insist upon the conversion of all privies into properly flushed w.c.'s.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—There are two licensed slaughter houses and one registered. These have been inspected during the year. No diseased animal or part thereof has been reported to me or come under my notice.

MILK SUPPLY.—The number of persons entered on the register is seven. The number of cow-keepers, three. The premises have been inspected during the year and found satisfactory. The cowsheds are linewashed half-yearly according to regulations during the months of May and October.

All the cows are inspected by a veterinary surgeon.

FOOD INSPECTION.—The Market has been inspected from time to time; all meat found to be sound. The shops and stores under inspection were, as a rule, found in a clean and satisfactory condition.

In January, 1913, owing to an outbreak of typhoid in a neighbouring district, and the patient having consumed oysters obtained from the Radstock Market, some oysters were obtained from a vendor in the Market, and sent to the County Analyst, who reported as follows: "Oysters show contamination with material of excretal origin, hence these oysters should be regarded with suspicion." I communicated with the Medical Officer of Health who controls the district from which the oysters were sent to Radstock, and he reported as follows: "No further consignment to be sent to Radstock before being cleansed."

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.—The Council School for 548 children is modern and in good order. The Church School, accommodating 400 children, is also well kept, and has recently been put in sanitary condition. Owing to an outbreak of measles in January, the infant departments of the Council and Church Schools were closed for three weeks.

RECREATION GROUND.—The provision of two recreation grounds, one of $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres and one of $\frac{1}{2}$ acre, cannot help but be of value to the district, and were much needed.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.—The number on the register is 28. All these have been inspected and found satisfactory.

HOUSING.—The number of new houses erected during the year is 46. Forty of these were erected by the Council. All of the Council houses are let, more than double the number of applications being made for the 40. The average number of persons per house equals 4.3. No Local Government Board inquiry has been held during the year.

I am requested to report as to whether the following Acts have been adopted in your district:—

- (1) Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890.
 - (2) " " " " " " " " 1907.
 - (3) Infectious Diseases Prevention Act, 1890
 - (4) Notification of Births Act, 1907.
- No. 1.—Part III. has been adopted.
No. 3.—Yes.
Nos. 2 and 4.—No.

Under the Housing Act of 1909 15 houses were inspected by the officer appointed to make the inspections.

The following are the results of his inspections:—

Number inspected	...	...	15
(a) Number reported as unfit for human habitation	...	...	1
(b) Number defective, but with defects not sufficient to report as unfit for habitation	...	...	6/14
(c) Number without recorded sanitary defects	...	...	none

Action taken and results in regard to houses reported as unfit during 1913:—

Number reported	...	...	15
Closing order made	...	...	none
Made fit without closing order	...	...	none
Still unfit but no closing order made	...	...	15
Demolished	...	...	none
Put in repair after closing order	...	...	none
Still closed at end of 1913	...	...	none

Action taken with regard to defective houses but not sufficient to report as unfit:—

Number so examined	...	...	8/14
Number with defects remedied by the end of 1913	...	...	none
Number still defective at end of 1913	...	...	6/14

No case of overcrowding has been dealt with during the year.

Your district was inspected by Dr. Savage, the County Medical Officer of Health, in October.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. E. SCALES,

Medical Officer of Health.

Report of the Inspector of Nuisances

For the Year ending 31st December, 1913.

GENTLEMEN,—

I beg to report to you as follows:—

EARTH CLOSETS.—With regard to the above, referred to in my last annual report upon the sanitary conveniences of the district, only four of the 34 earth closets or privies, have since (January, 1914) been converted into properly flushed w.c.'s.

This work was done after the agent to the owner mentioned last year had been served with a notice by order of the Council under Section 36 of the Public Health Act, 1875.

NUISANCES.—During the year 54 nuisances were discovered either on inspection or by complaint.

Statutory notices were served in 10 cases.

All the matters were put right. The nuisances consisted principally of blocked or broken drains, the remaining cases being accumulations of ashes, filth, etc.

DISINFECTION.—Fourteen houses have been disinfected during the year. Formalin spraying and lamps have been used, except in the case of tuberculosis where Izal Solution has been used. In the latter case the walls, floors, ceilings and bedding have been well sprayed, and the rooms afterwards scrubbed out with the same solution.

Several cases have been brought to my notice by the County Council Health Visitor, where patients have been using bedrooms where the bottom sashes of the windows could only be propped open, and where the top sashes would not open at all. The agent to the owner has been written to upon this matter, and he has promised to have it attended to.

SEWER EXTENSION.—The main sewer has been extended so as to take in the drainage from eight new houses in course of erection at Foxhills.

A short branch has also been put in to receive the drainage from the 40 houses erected by the Council at Wells Road.

WORKSHOPS, ETC.—These have been inspected from time to time during the year, and verbal instructions given where required, as to white-washing and cleansing, and these have been carried out.

There is still one workshop where there is no w.c. accommodation for the workpeople, and there is another where the only convenience is a very defective earth-closet, situate a considerable distance from the workroom.

These have been reported upon before.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.—The 40 cottages at Wells Road, referred to in my last annual report, were all completed and let by the middle of December last, and I have had applications for more than another 20 houses since these were let.

Up to the end of the year four other houses were erected by a private owner, and these are also occupied.

HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING, ETC., ACT. 1909.—At the November meeting of the Council I was instructed to inspect, under the above Act, 17 houses scheduled by the Medical Officer of Health.

I inspected and reported on six to the December Council meeting.

In the case of one, a closing order was made at the January, 1914, meeting, and in the other five cases, representations were made to the owners, as to the necessary works required to make the houses in all respects fit for human habitation. As regards four of these, the owners are proposing to carry out the works, and in the remaining one the owner has voluntarily offered to pull it down, and it is understood that he will erect a new house on the site.

The Council have also instructed me to make further inspections from time to time, as instructed by the Medical Officer of Health, and I am now awaiting his directions in the matter.

RIVER BED.—Last year, being a comparatively dry one, large accumulations of filth and mud and silt were present in the bed of the River Somer.

So far as Radstock and Clandown are concerned there is very little untreated sewage entering this river at the present time. It is, however, to be remembered that for a long number of years it was practically an open sewer, and that it has never been cleansed since the sewage was diverted from it. The cleansing of the whole length within the district in one year would not be practicable, but the Council might, I think, use with advantage their influence to get the proper parties to clean out a length from the Western boundary near Welton Bridge, which is in a very bad state, and where, during the summer, many complaints have been received from the residents in the immediate neighbourhood.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient Servant,

GEO. H. GIBSON.

Radstock; 11th February, 1914.

REGISTER OF RAINFALL AT RADSTOCK,
From the 1st day of JANUARY, 1913, to the 31st day of DECEMBER, 1913.

NOTE.—Symon's Gauge, 8in. in diameter, is used, placed in an exposed position, 8ft. from the ground level, behind the residence of the Surveyor, which is 330 feet above sea level.

Observations taken at noon each day and calculations made up to that time.

MONTH.		Wet Days 1912.	Wet Days 1913.	Greatest Fall on the	Amount in Inches.	Smallest Fall on the	Amount in Inches.	Daily Average Wet Days Only.	Total 1913.	Total 1912.
JANUARY	..	16	22	23rd	1.10	6th	0.01	0.34	7.55	4.76
FEBRUARY	..	13	9	9th	0.76	25th	0.03	0.25	2.32	2.28
MARCH	..	23	15	17th	0.80	11th	0.03	0.32	4.85	7.05
APRIL	..	3	16	16th	0.93	4th	0.01	0.28	4.51	0.47
MAY	..	9	12	4th	0.79	11th	0.01	0.24	2.97	1.95
JUNE	..	20	6	6th	0.48	23rd	0.08	0.19	1.16	4.50
JULY	..	14	7	6th	0.14	14th	0.05	0.07	0.55	3.45
AUGUST	..	21	6	24th	0.28	13th	0.02	0.13	0.82	7.48
SEPTEMBER	..	2	12	5th	1.45	16th	0.01	0.39	3.83	0.78
OCTOBER	..	16	16	7th	1.16	9th	0.01	0.28	4.55	6.08
NOVEMBER	..	12	20	12th	0.85	1st	0.01	0.18	3.73	2.00
DECEMBER	..	25	14	6th	0.70	8th	0.02	0.18	2.59	7.52
		174	155						39.43	50.12

MEMO.—The total rainfall in London for 1913 was 22.41 inches on 163 days. At Seathwaite (Lanes.) the total fall was 124.07 inches. The average rainfall in the British Isles for 1913 was 38.29 inches, and for 35 years 1875—1909 it was 38.66 inches. The average number of wet days at Radstock from 1901 to 1912 inclusive was 145, and the average rainfall 33.53 inches.

GEO. H. GIBSON, Surveyor,
RADSTOCK U.D.C.

Radstock : February, 1914.

Urban District Council
of Radstock,
IN THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

ANNUAL REPORTS
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
(DR. J. E. SCALES),
AND THE
Inspector of Nuisances
(GEO. H. GIBSON),
respectively,

For the year ending 31st December, 1913.

11th February, 1914.